

**ABSTRACT:** A manual input system for efficient generation of inputs by entering chords comprises a keyboard (66) and input system software (68). The keyboard (66) comprises ten colored keys (74, 76, 78, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, and 92) and a legend (94) of symbols and chord representations. The keys of the keyboard (66) each have a different color and are operated by a different digit of a human operator. The legend (94) presents the assignment of chords to the symbols found on the standard computer keyboard. Chords are represented by colors and symbol groups representing the fingers involved in a chord. The legend (94) enables determination of chords by visualizing the position of symbols relative to the symbol groups. Character chords involve only fingers, while modifier chords involve only thumbs, so that each character can be combined with each modifier. Command chords also involve a thumb, so that accidental input of modified characters and commands during character input is prevented.